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This thesis consists of drawings and collages exhibited at
the Weatherspoon Gallery of the University of North Carolina at
Greensboro from January 15-29, 1978. On file in the Jackson Library
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WORKS ON PAPER

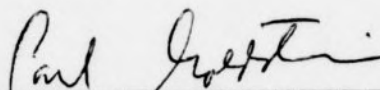
by

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A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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Approved by



Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of
the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina
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Dec - 6, 1977
Date of Acceptance by Committee

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I would like to thank my parents for their encouragement and the members of my thesis committee, Mr. Peter Agostini, Mr. Andrew Martin, Mr. Carl Goldstein and Mr. Ben Berns, for their assistance.

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My thesis exhibition consists of drawings and collages that are large works on paper and deal with observed and assimilated structures in an investigation of tension-producing, geometrically invented closures.

About 10-15 drawings; biggish. The smallest, 16" x 22"; most 40" x 30"; three or four big. The smallest size was selected for control of medium, of gesture, of proportion. The middle size was selected because I am most comfortable with it: I can feel its size, can feel a more one-to-one encounter in an approach. I can feel my space. The large size was selected also in terms of the feeling of confrontation: it is a little larger than I, also for the special presence of the work and also for the challenge of maintaining control of a large area with my touch. But mainly because a large work like that can have a composition that results from a number of smaller compositions--like microcosms in a macrocosm.

My choice of paper: I am drawn to paper because of its accessibility. It is easy to get, and with it the maximum number of technical barriers are eliminated. (I don't want to be a slave to technique.) Moreover, it picks up, is responsive to, the touch. In sum, it is to me the medium closest to my fingertips. My choice of papers in terms of color: before my last show, the color of the paper represented the highest value, and the colors applied to it were graduated down in value from that. I felt limited by the fact that color was dictated by the paper, so now I try all kinds of colors.

However, my color is local, not atmospheric. I want my color to push and pull against the structural configuration. I am now working with cool vs. warm, with blues and pinks: I like these colors. I also like these particular materials: they are materials of subtle quality.

The particular images that I have been working with recently --flasks--I find of interest because they are pure shapes. With them the subject matter is less important, is not so recognizable. Ornament, detail, what Mondrian called an illusionistic "veil," has been stripped. I like their shapes, they are rigid, they are constructions, they come apart and describe or define enclosure-states. (These recent images derive, although not so recognizably, from still-life subject matter, and, like all of my more obviously recognizably representational still lifes, they deal with the inness and outness of things.) The flasks are structures. Because of their simplicity, they are somehow revealing of the essence of structure. I see structure as something that defies gravity and its essence as characterized by a relative verticality that always bears an inherent stress in order to maintain that verticality: thus my recurrent interest in stacking, in the verticality that has characterized my art work for a number of years.

To me only art with a special inner tension is of interest. To create tension I use assemblies of constructed lines to work for an ambivalence between positive and negative space. This ambivalence and resulting tension are made pronounced by the use of closure. I

believe that the existing visual tension in a volume of space or in a given area is directly related to the rate of enclosure and the nature of the respective configurations. This is a major issue I am engaged with.

Moreover, I am concerned with the issue not only of enclosure in the drawn image but also of the enclosure of the edge of the paper itself. My involvement with the edge can be traced back to my being told, about 1974, by Peter Agostini, that Stephen Cusumano (whose art I was deeply interested in because of what I felt to be a striking similarity of concerns and with whom I had been planning to study) always started to draw by beginning with the point in his visual field that was closest to him. In putting this method into practice, I located this closest point of a given observed space on the border I had drawn a little within the edge of paper (because of technical considerations--i.e. for tacks, tape, etc.--and for room for me to "breathe" outside the drawn closure). I became very interested when I began to cross the drawn border with the pencil: the issue became one of "breaking the closure" and in turn made me become involved with the edge of the paper where, I felt, the same issue was brought into play. In the past six months I have adopted the point of view that sees an art object as self-referring and as not necessarily looking to an external reality for its validity. I am now in an ambivalent state--my work takes external reality as a point of departure and is also subject to its own rules--and this ambiguity produces a tension in my work that I find interesting.

My long-range objective is to produce an object that relies even less on external reality and is more completely self-referring. This goal of course draws into play the importance of the edge.

Collage--a recent interest--supports my interest in calling attention to paper. Cutting out paper and applying it to another is a material reinforcement of my concern with structure; it enables me to construct a "structure" analogous to the flask with not only drawn line but with the edge created by differences of physical qualities of assembled papers. Moreover, it continues my interest in overlap brought into prominence by my interest in the edge.

I would characterize my tension as all-over, ribbonlike, such as is found in Oriental art, and not target-like, as in Renaissance art: because I am interested in balance, but not perfect balance: being on the edge of balance--that's what interests me. This occasional feeling that things are on the verge of balance is what I enjoy about living, and I seek this feeling in my art. As in life, in my art is controlled conflict.